

# Puberty

Grades 7 and 8, Lesson #2

## Time Needed

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45-50 minutes

## Student Learning Objectives

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To be able to...

1. List at least three physical and three emotional/social changes that happen to both males and females at puberty.
2. List at least two physical changes that happen only to males and at least two that happen only to females.
3. Explain that variation in age-of-onset and in duration of puberty is normal.

## Agenda

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1. Identify this lesson as primarily a review.
2. Define puberty.
3. Use the Puberty Worksheet to discuss the nature and events of puberty.
4. Use Puberty Transparency to discuss the timing of puberty and peoples' feelings about it.
5. Use the Puberty Reference Sheet to reassure students about the normalcy of the changes they are experiencing (or will experience).
6. Answer students' verbal and anonymous questions.
7. Assign homework.

This lesson was most recently edited on July 15, 2013  
Alternative formats available upon request.

**Materials Needed:**

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**Classroom Materials:**

*Puberty Transparencies 1-3* and overhead projector  
or

PowerPoint Slides of *Puberty Transparencies 1-3* and a computer & LCD projector  
(available on the web: [www.kingcounty.gov/health/flash](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health/flash))

**Student Materials: (for each student)**

*Puberty Worksheet*

*Puberty Reference Sheet*

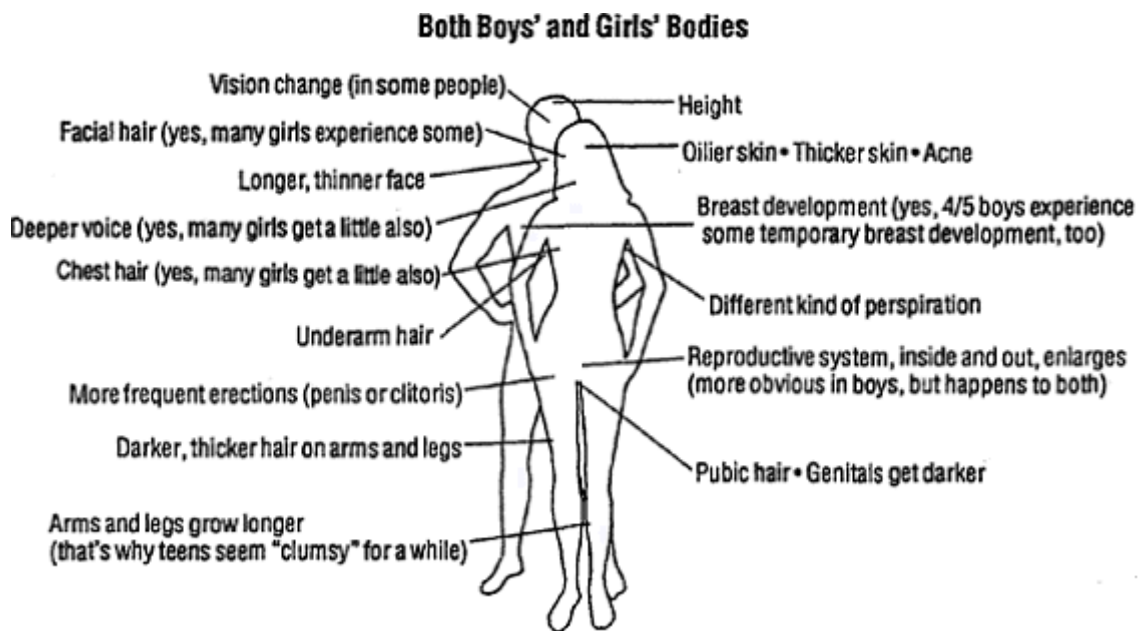
*Family Homework Exercise: Puberty*

*Family Field Trip 1*

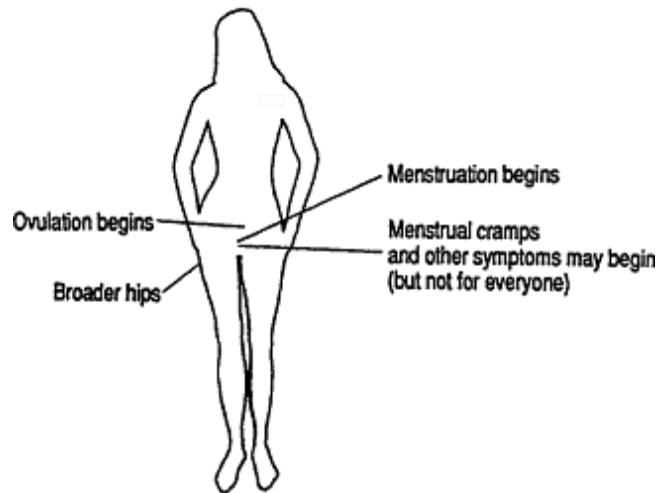
*Appendix B: Family Homework Letter (with Confirmation Slip)*

## Activities

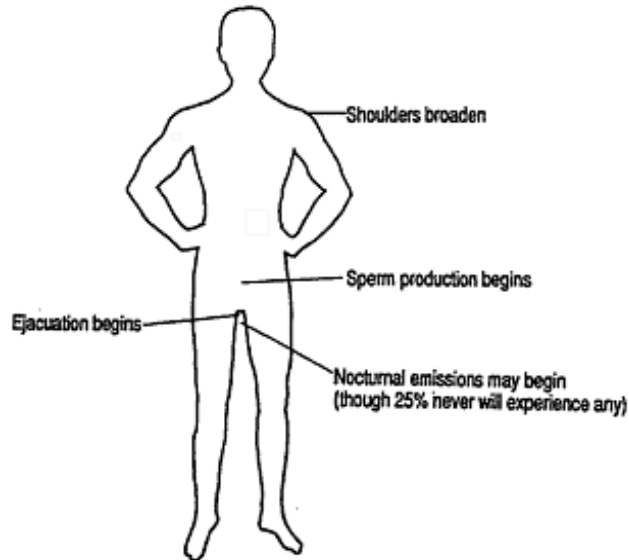
1. Identify this lesson as primarily a review. By 7th or 8th grade, most students will have been introduced to puberty topics in an earlier class, but some will not have been really ready to hear the concepts, because it was not yet personally relevant. Others will have questions that have arisen since their earlier lessons. Thus, you will have to present “old” information in a respectful enough way that students do not feel you are talking down to them.
2. Ask for a volunteer, or several volunteers, to define puberty. If they are reasonably on target, affirm that their answers are good. Add (if they do not) that puberty:
  - Is a process, not a single event.
  - Happens in the body, but also in the heart and mind and relationships.
3.
  - Remind the class of the ground rules.
  - Have individuals or partners fill out the Puberty Worksheet. Allow about five to 10 minutes. Point out that there are LOTS of right answers.
  - For each section of the worksheet, ask volunteers to share their answers aloud, or if they feel too awkward, to turn them in to you so you can read their thoughts aloud. On Puberty Transparencies 1 and 2, around each figure, Write down what students say, indicating with little lines approximately where each change takes place (internally or externally). You will end up with something like this:



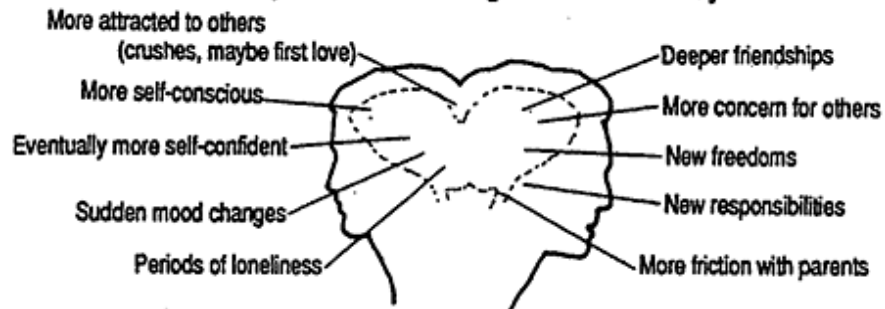
### Girls' Bodies Only



### Boys' Bodies Only



### Boys' and Girls' Changes NOT in the Body



4. Show Puberty Transparency 3 and explain it: These are the ages at which 18 typical kids went through puberty. Apologize to the class if any of your students' names are on the transparency and clarify that these are imaginary persons. Discussion questions might include (see transparency for each of these):
  - What is the age range of starting puberty for these girls? (almost 8-13) <sup>1,2,3</sup>
  - What is the age range of starting puberty for these boys? (9-14) <sup>4,5</sup>
  - How long does it seem to take for people to complete the changes of puberty? (Two or three years, for girls; four or more for boys.)
  - Carole started puberty at about 10 and a half. Now she's 12 and still not fully mature. Should she worry about it? (No)
  - Adam started puberty this year, at about age 12. His brother, Stone (not on the transparency) is 11. Should he expect to start puberty in one year? (Not necessarily)
  - Mary (not on the transparency) is 17 and has not started puberty. Should she worry about it? (Yes) What should she do? (See a doctor, maybe an endocrinologist)
  - William is 12. Can he start a pregnancy? (Maybe, he started puberty last year)
  - Osamu is 12. Can he start a pregnancy? (No; he won't start puberty until he's 14 and a half)
5. Hand out, and read aloud, or have volunteers read aloud, the Puberty Reference Sheet.
6. Answer students' verbal and anonymous questions.
7. Optional: Assign homework. Possible assignments might be...
  - A Family Homework Exercise: Puberty (Students will need to take home The Homework Letter and Family Homework Confirmation Slips - Appendix B - if they haven't already.)
  - Family Field Trip 1 (Students will need to take home The Homework Letter and Family Homework Confirmation Slips if they haven't already.)
  - Read a novel about puberty and write a page or two explaining how the main character changed during puberty ... or what he or she discovered or learned. Ask your school or public librarian for suggested titles.

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<sup>1</sup> The American Association of Pediatrics. (2005). *Puberty Information for Boys and Girls - Public Education Brochure*. Retrieved June 15, 2009 from Teen Q & A Web site: <http://www.aap.org/family/puberty.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Steingraber, S. (2007). *The Falling Age of Puberty in U.S. Girls: What We Know, What We Need to Know* Retrieved August 14, 2009 from Breast Cancer Fund Web site: [http://www.breastcancerfund.org/site/c.kwKXLdPaE/b.3266509/k.27C1/Falling\\_Age\\_of\\_Puberty\\_Main\\_Page.htm](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/site/c.kwKXLdPaE/b.3266509/k.27C1/Falling_Age_of_Puberty_Main_Page.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Family Practice Notebook. (before May 10, 2008). *Female Tanner Stage*. Retrieved August 14, 2009 from <http://www.fpnotebook.com/Endo/Exam/FmlTnrStg.htm>

<sup>4</sup> The American Association of Pediatrics. *Puberty Information for Boys and Girls - Public Education Brochure*.

<sup>5</sup> Family Practice Notebook. (before May 10, 2008). *Male Tanner Stage*. Retrieved August 14, 2009 from <http://www.fpnotebook.com/Endo/Exam/MlTnrStg.htm>

# Puberty Transparency 1

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**Both Boys' and Girls' Bodies**



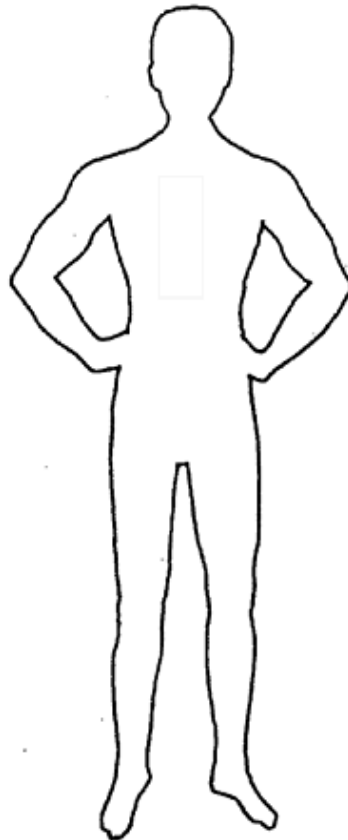
**Girls' Bodies Only**



# Puberty Transparency 2

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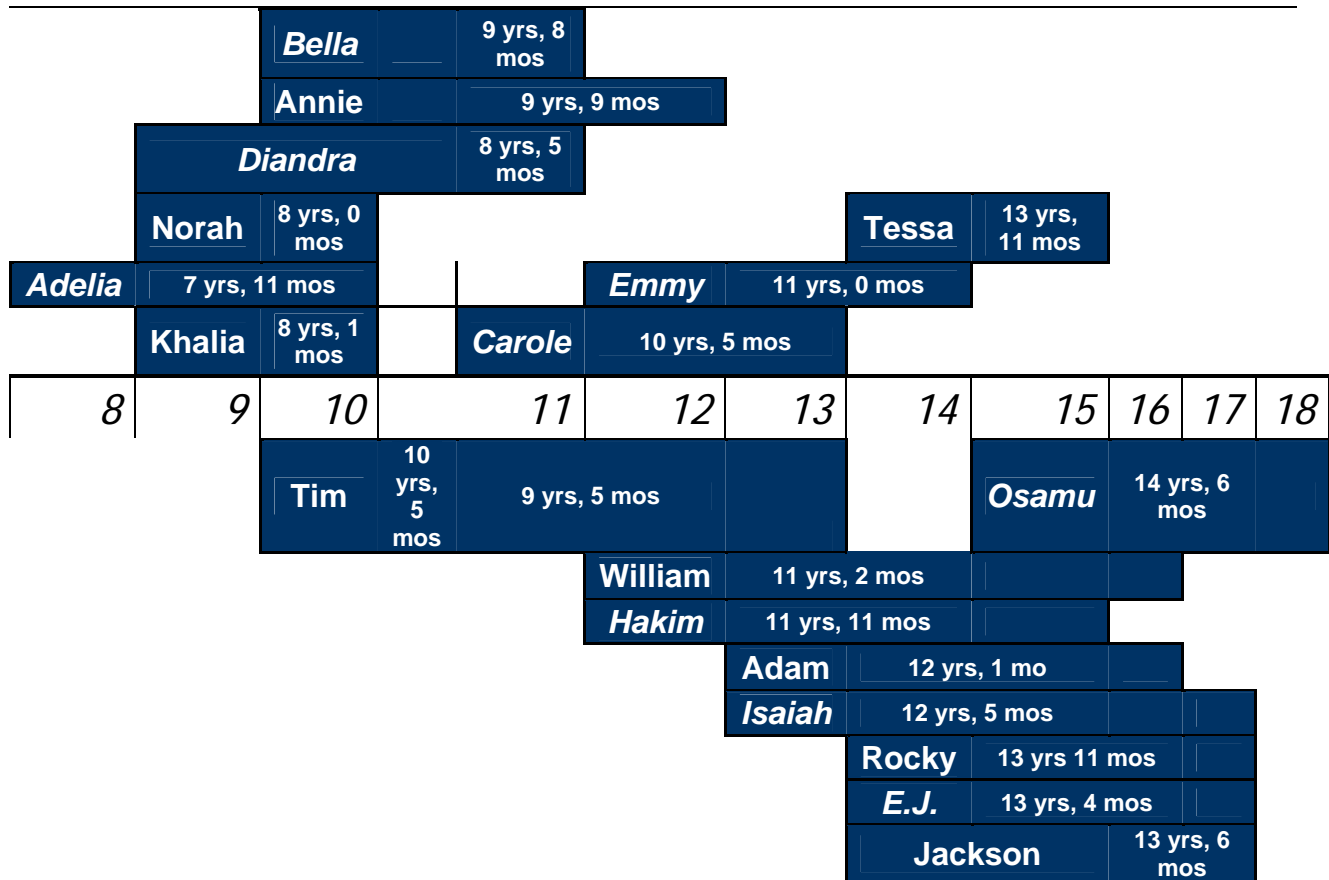
**Boys' Bodies Only**



**Boys' and Girls' Changes NOT in the Body**



# Puberty Transparency 3





# Puberty Worksheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



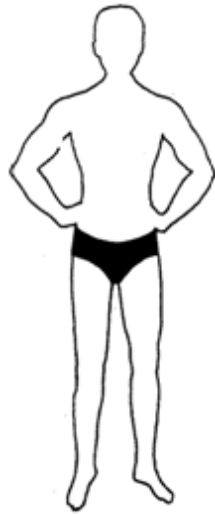
A. List four changes that happen to both boys' and girls' bodies at puberty. Use complete sentences.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. List three changes that happen to girls' bodies at puberty. Use complete sentences.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





C. List three changes that happen to boys' bodies at puberty. Use complete sentences.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. Describe two changes that happen to a person at puberty that are NOT in their body. (Like changes in feelings, relationships, how they behave.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Puberty Reference Sheet

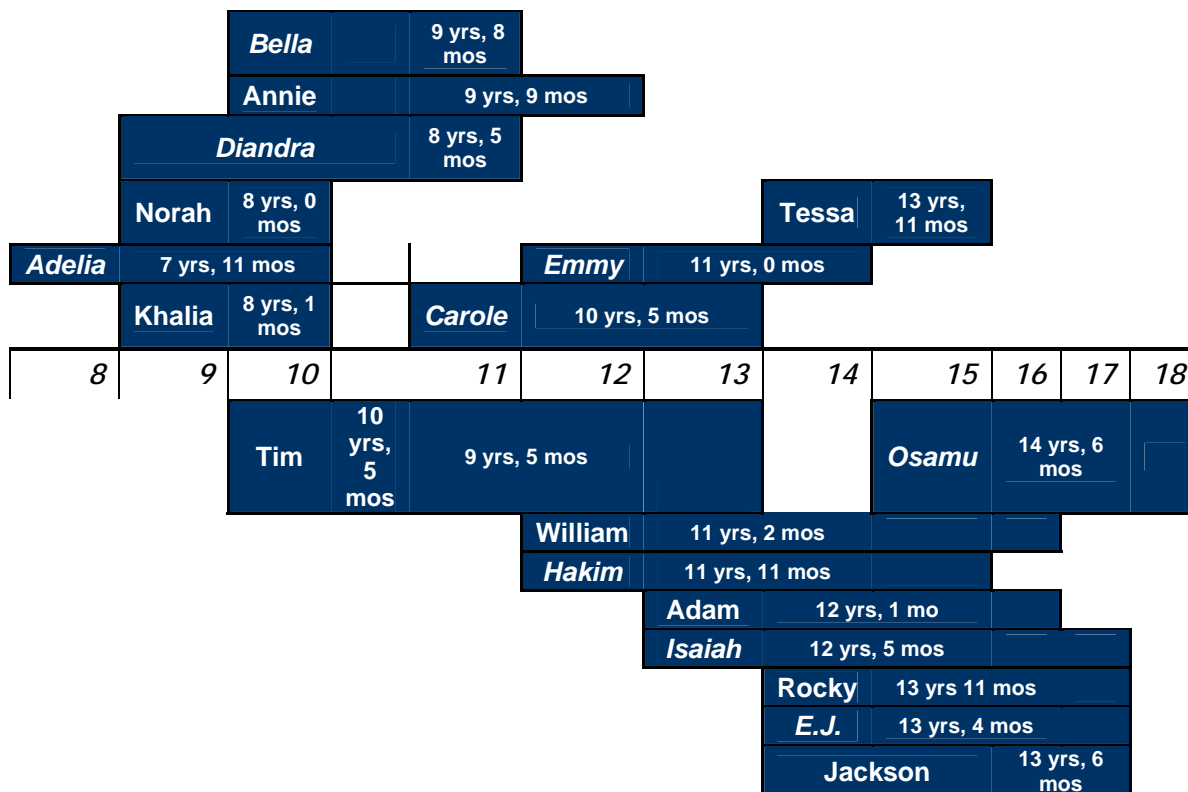
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PUBERTY:** The time (usually between about 8 and 14) when your body, friendships and feelings begin changing from a child's into an adult's. This can be an exciting, challenging, fun, and sometimes scary time. It happens because of hormone changes.

**ADOLESCENCE:** The time between puberty and adulthood.

## Bodies

The most noticeable changes of puberty and adolescence are the physical (body) ones. They may take a while to get used to and people sometimes worry about them. What if a guy never gets much hair on his face or chest? That's fine. People are different from one another. What if he never has a nocturnal emission (a wet dream)? Is he normal? Yes, many guys never do. Should a girl worry about the clear or white discharge (liquid) that comes out of her vagina starting at puberty? No, it means she's healthy. It is her body's way of cleaning itself, just like the liquid in her eyes. What if one breast is bigger than the other? That happens to many people. It's perfectly healthy. How about if a boy notices breast growth? That's common, too. In fact it happens to most boys and usually disappears after a year or so. But if these people are worried, they can go to the doctor. He or she can give them a check-up and reassure them that everything is OK. Remember also, that people develop at their own rates. Each person is unique and special.



### Friendship

People's friendships start to change during puberty, too. In fact, one of the jobs a person has during puberty and adolescence is to learn how to make and maintain close friendships ... with both guys and girls. You learn what kinds of people you like to be around. You learn what kind of person you want to be. You learn how to tell whether somebody likes you and how to tell whether you can trust them. You learn how to show what you feel. Learning about friendship is part of learning how to love ... because friendship is really the main ingredient of love.

Loneliness is a problem for many people, especially at your age. You may have outgrown some friends, and others have outgrown you. You may feel shy about making new friends, or just not know how. And most people your age worry about "fitting in" and being liked. That's very normal. A few pieces of advice:

- 1) Don't try so hard to fit in that you forget who you are deep inside.
- 2) Do reach out to other people. Get to know them ... be considerate of their feelings, and expect them to care about your feelings.
- 3) Don't leap into having a boyfriend or girlfriend JUST to fit in. Friendship has to grow first.
- 4) Do treat boys and girls like people ... because they are.
- 5) Don't tease people. They're trying to grow up and fit in just like you are.
- 6) If you ever GET teased, learn how to defend yourself without putting the other person down.

For example...

"That was a stupid thing to do!" .....	<i>"Don't put me down."</i>
"You're fat." .....	<i>"What difference does that make?"</i>
.....	<i>You have blue eyes. So what?"</i>
"What's the matter? Are you queer? .....	<i>"IF I WERE gay, it would be my</i>
.....	<i>private business."</i>
"You must be chicken." .....	<i>"So I should take your dare just to</i>
.....	<i>prove I'm not scared? Forget it."</i>

### Feelings

Sometimes you may feel excited, confident, and ready for new challenges. Other times, you may feel awkward, shy, and embarrassed. Gradually, you'll start to feel confident and relaxed in more and more situations. Nobody can make this happen overnight. There's nothing you could learn in class to magically speed you past puberty and adolescence. Maybe it helps to know that everybody else feels these kinds of feelings sometimes, too. At least you're not the only one. You are special ... but you're also human.

It's important to remember, too, that feelings change. When people feel sad, they may think, they'll always feel sad, but they won't. When people feel hurt, they may not be able to imagine feeling any other way, but they will. If they never felt sad, they couldn't ever feel joyful. If they never felt hurt, they couldn't ever feel loved. It's all part of being human. It's all part of growing up.

# A Family Homework Exercise: Puberty

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ALL FAMILY HOMEWORK EXERCISES ARE OPTIONAL.

A lot of things have changed since your parents or guardians were your age--and even greater changes have happened since your grandparents' day. One of the things that remain the same is the order of the physical changes we go through as we become adults. This activity should help you learn more about puberty and what it was like for other people.

**Directions:** Use the list of questions below to interview a parent or guardian and, if possible, a grandparent or other elder to discover what puberty was like for them. Do not bother writing down their answers and do not be in a hurry to get to the next question. Take time to talk about the answers and to ask your own questions too. You might want to bring up your feelings and concerns.

(In this activity the son/daughter uses this worksheet to interview their parents or guardians. There is no worksheet for parents or guardians.)

1. Who did you talk to when you had questions about growing up? Did you have questions you were too embarrassed to ask?
2. What were you concerned about when you were my age?
3. How did you feel about boys/girls when you were my age? Did you have a boyfriend/girlfriend? What rules did your family have about dates? What did people do on dates?
4. What was expected of you because you were male/female? Were there things you were not supposed to do because you were male/female?
5. What did you look like? Did you like the way you looked?

NOTE: Turn in a Family Homework Confirmation Slip by \_\_\_\_\_ if you want credit.

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# Family Field Trip 1

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## **ALL FAMILY HOMEWORK EXERCISES ARE OPTIONAL.**

Growing up has never been easy. Maybe it's even more difficult today than before; there are certainly more pressures and more sources of misinformation.

Most parents and guardians want to be primary "sex educators" of their children, but they do not always know what to say. Attending a workshop together can help. Your church or synagogue may offer such events. Sometimes Boy or Girl Scouts, a Boys' and Girls' Club, or a Campfire group offers family sexuality sessions. If not, ask the person who plans the programs to schedule one ... by calling your local Health Department, Planned Parenthood, Children's Hospital or Urban League.

NOTE: If you attend a family workshop together on puberty, you can get credit. Just turn in a Family Homework Confirmation Slip by \_\_\_\_\_.